



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE **108th** CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

FRIDAY JANUARY 9, 2003

Senate

In Memory of Leon Weiner

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, I would like to set aside a moment to reflect on the life of Mr. Leon N. Weiner upon his passing. Leon was a good friend and a man who made remarkable contributions toward affordable housing for thousands of families in Delaware and many more beyond our state's borders. He was a man with a kind heart, diverse interests, great abilities, and boundless energy.

Leon was born in Philadelphia, PA. After graduating from Overbrook High School, he attended the University of Pennsylvania for 3 years before leaving to take up a job as an apprentice machinist at Westinghouse Electric Corp. in Essington, PA.

After serving his country in the Army Air Corps during World War II, Leon came to Delaware and joined his uncle in building Leedom Estates near New Castle. This was one of the first suburban housing projects in New Castle County and the first of more than 5,000 houses that Leon built across New Castle County during his 54-year career. At the age of 53, he turned his attention to the challenge of building housing for low- and moderate-income families and seniors.

A very colorful character, Leon spoke with a booming voice and always wore suspenders, something that became his trademark. To the end of his days his office was filled with honorary gavels, keys to cities, and pictures of him with leading Democratic figures. In 1979 he was inducted to the National Housing Hall of Fame and subsequently was given the National Housing Man of the Year Award. His appointment to the Kaiser Commission on Urban Housing led to the landmark Housing Act of 1968.

Leon leaves behind his wife of 53 years, Helen; as well as a stepdaughter; three grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren. He also leaves behind many friends, colleagues and several thousand families who are living more productive, satisfying lives today because Leon was committed to building affordable housing.

Leon's lifelong dream was that low-income seniors and families would have the opportunity to afford their own homes, in the communities they called home. He lived to see that dream largely fulfilled.

Leon's legacy will live on in the lives of those he helped shape, in the rooms of affordable low-income housing he helped

build, and in the hearts of those who were lucky enough to call him their friend. I rise today to commemorate Leon's life, to celebrate his life, and to offer his family our support and our thanks for sharing with the rest of us a truly remarkable human being. Although a resident of nearby Pennsylvania, Leon embodied the best of Delaware where his firm, Leon Weiner and Associates, was headquartered. He will be sorely missed. I know he can never be replaced.